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Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction appoints new Director

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (HRPR) today announced the appointment of Tom Cooper as new Director.

“I am extremely pleased that Tom Cooper will be taking on the challenge of directing the Roundtable’s efforts in working with the community to reduce poverty,” said Mark Chamberlain, chair of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. “Tom will bring his extensive experience to help address the difficulties facing Hamilton’s families”

Cooper served for the past 11 years as community development coordinator at McQuesten Legal & Community Services where he worked directly on public policy issues affecting low-income residents. He had been a member of the Roundtable since its inception in 2005 and chaired its policy working group. Cooper also chairs the Fairness for Hamilton Committee – which has worked with the Mayor, City Council and the community to address Hamilton’s funding challenges.

“It has been my pleasure to work with Tom Cooper on a number of critical concerns for Hamilton. Tom’s collaborative approach exemplifies our City’s potential to come together to solve problems.” said Mayor Fred Eisenberger.

Tom Cooper has been serving as interim director for the Roundtable since September. He starts his new post November 16. Cooper was raised in central Hamilton and is a McMaster University graduate. He has also been a freelance columnist with the Hamilton Spectator for the past three years.

About the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction was born out of concern for our community’s poverty challenge. Spearheaded by Hamilton Community Foundation and the City of Hamilton, the Roundtable has worked since May 2005 to understand Hamilton’s high poverty levels, focus the community’s attention on poverty, and begin to find solutions.

With the ongoing support and involvement of the Foundation and the City, HRPR is today a multi-sector 42 member body that has engaged more than 900 organizations and 42,000 individuals in Hamilton around a community aspiration: to Make Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child. The Roundtable is financially supported by the Hamilton Community Foundation, the City of Hamilton, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and individual donors.

In recent years, the HRPR has influenced the adoption of the Ontario Poverty Strategy and has helped leverage \$27 million in funding for poverty reduction priorities in Hamilton. In June, the Roundtable was awarded the ‘David Crombie Urban Leadership Award’ by the Canadian Urban Institute for its innovative approaches to tackling poverty.

HRPR is developing a new action plan to advance Hamilton’s poverty reduction efforts into the next phase of work. Hamiltonians have been hit hard by the global recession, and despite many successes in Hamilton’s poverty reduction efforts, much more remains to be done. The Roundtable will engage community members early in January with several focused priorities for action.

For more information, please contact the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction at 905-523-5600 x248.